

Veterans Committee Report 2023

2023 was a productive year for veterans fencing in Alberta.

Provincial Championships saw all three weapons have veterans events. Epee saw both men's and women's events while foil and sabre saw mixed events. Having all three weapons have events has not been common so having the events have sufficient entries was nice to see. More work needs to be done to encourage our recreational fencers in foil and sabre to give competitions a chance.

Work completed by the committee this year included the development of a mailing list of veterans fencers to reach out to the veterans community to share relevant information with them.

The most effort was spent on the Veterans/Adult training camp held in Spruce Grove at the end of August/beginning of September. The camp was a very ambitious undertaking with some things being successful and others not so much. Lessons were learned from both. The efforts around marketing have provided a good foundation for the revived marketing committee to build upon in the next year.

As for the camp itself, the feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive and interest has been expressed in next years camp. Tentatively, the camp is planned for Red Deer about the same time in 2024. Planning will proceed with the new Board and Committee.

Deriving out of the activities at the camp is the proposal for a mixed team event at 2024 Provincials (see below proposal). Early feedback has been positive and supportive of pursuing this idea further. Additional feedback is welcome.

Proposed Team Event for Provincials

Successfully running team events at both the provincial and national levels is challenging.

Most clubs do not have sufficient fencers in any age and weapon category to make up a complete team. Even many provinces lack sufficient depth in any age/weapon category to create a competitive team. Consequently, when team events are held, there is often one overpowering team which inhibits the willingness of others to even make an effort to enter. A lack of opportunity to succeed limits the willingness of people to participate.

The format being proposed therefore attempts to address this issue making it difficult to create a “stacked” team. For every team, there should be at least one event where they are at a disadvantage to any other team while having an advantage in other events, creating the opportunity for all teams to be competitive and making the event much more enjoyable for all competitors and spectators. When the competitors are having fun, it is more fun to watch.

This event, targeted at the senior/veteran ranks, can provide us with skills and insights that are useful

for developing events for the lower age categories in the future.

Team Challenge 160

Teams would be composed of 4 fencers: 2 men, 2 women

The combined ages of the fencers must add up to a minimum of 160

No minimum age, no maximum age

All 6 events would be fenced (WE,WF,WS,ME,MF,MS) to a score of 30 points

Teams could only have fencers from 2 clubs (3 and 1, or, 2 and 2)

No limit on the number of teams a club could send

Teams must have a nickname, that may or may not include a club name

Rules to be developed by the Tournament Committee before the event could be offered:

Specify the rules of the event including:

Specifying the rules governing the selection of the order of events, *given that whichever event goes last could be a significant mismatch (ie, a specialist fencing someone who does not regularly fence that weapon).*

What is the appropriate age sum: 160 (avg 40), 140 (avg 35), 180 (avg 45)? *Leave this to the organizers and just give generic guidance so the rules don't need amending when competitions for younger groups are developed?*

Do we let university clubs compete with a team of 6 fencers? Corresponding maximum age?
Other restrictions?

How are injury withdrawals dealt with? *Given that it may not be possible for a team to share equipment (size differences) and not all fencers will have a complete set for all weapons, will substitutions be allowed? We want to encourage participation without allowing teams to game a substitution rule (strategic withdrawals).*

How to deal with out of province fencers/teams given the club restriction posted above? *May out of province fencers pool together to form a team regardless of club/province affiliation?*